

LA MOUILLE NEWSDEALER.

VOLUME 1.

HYDE PARK, VERMONT, FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 1860.

NUMBER 1.

S. HOWARD, Jr., Publisher.

"Quocumque me Fortuna ferat, ibo hospes."

TERMS: \$1.25 within three months.
\$1.50 after three months.

THE LONELY SHIP.

BY HAWSER MARTINGALE.

It was just one hundred years ago, when an occurrence took place in Newport, R. I., which caused great excitement among the inhabitants of that town, and which is still referred to by the old residents as the "Legend of the Lonely Ship."

Early one pleasant morning in the month of October, 1760, a square rigged vessel was seen approaching the harbor from the offing, under full sail, with a fresh breeze from the southward. As this vessel, which was remarked as steered very wildly, approaching the harbor, many conjectures were made respecting her character and name. At length she was recognized as the brig Sea Bird, Captain Huxham, a vessel which was expected from Bristol, in England, about that time.

The brig continued her course toward the harbor still yawning about in a remarkable manner; and it was about eleven o'clock in the forenoon, when, having entered the fair channel between the Beaver's Tail and Brenton's Reef, she kept along before the wind, directly toward the town of Newport. An arrival from abroad in those days was an event of no little importance, in which all the inhabitants of the place are interested, and the good people of Newport, assembled on the wharves, eager to greet their bluff townsman, Captain Huxham, and learn the news from abroad.

The course of the brig was still onward, but when the people expected to see her hauled to the wind and enter the harbor to anchor in front of the town, or haul alongside the wharf, to their astonishment they found no change was made in her course, and no sail taken in. The brig was evidently not bound for Newport, but instead of passing up Narragansett Bay, was running directly for the beach to the northward of the wharves!

The brig was hailed from the shore, but no answer was returned. Her danger was pointed out to her, and those on board were warned to change her course, or the vessel would be wrecked; but even this could elicit no reply. It was then remarked, to the consternation of the assembled islanders, and eagerly whispered around that not a man could be seen on her decks! The brig was steered by some invisible hand, and in a few minutes struck the shore within half a dozen rods of the wondering crowd which had hastened to the spot.

Boats immediately put off from the shore by men eager to learn the cause of this extraordinary proceeding. They found the fire still burning in the cabin, and the usual preparations for breakfast had been made. The table in the cabin was set, the captain's dressing-gown was lying at the foot of the cabin stairs, as if it had been hastily thrown off, but no living thing was found on board, excepting a dog, which greeted them with extraordinary marks of fondness when they stepped on the deck. The boats were both missing and the long boat had been recently hoisted out, as was evident by the tackles on the yards; but the baggage of the officers and crew had apparently not been disturbed. The log-book was missing, but the ship's papers and the Captain's writings, with the exception of his journal, were all found in regular order.

The questions were asked, where are the crew? What terrible event compelled them at a moment's warning to quit the vessel, and what had been their fate? Suspensions of the most dreadful kind were aroused—suspicions of piracy or murder. But no blood or traces of a desperate struggle were seen on the decks. Some thought that the crew, alarmed at the approach of a squall, or some imaginary danger, took to the boats and were lost. But these questions were not satisfactorily answered. The facts furnished but slight grounds for an hypothesis. No traces of the crew were ever discovered during the life time of those who witnessed the approach of the lonely vessel to the strand; and many believed, and the belief is entertained by some to this day, that the brig was guided safely past the reefs and danger of the coast, and through the narrow channel to her destined port and home, by some mysterious supernatural power!

In the lines on "The Lonely Ship," published in the poems of the "Two Sisters of the West," the appearance of the vessel as she struck the shore, and the appalling effect produced by her deserted decks, on the minds of those who boarded her are thus described:

"They tell of solitary halls
In lands beyond the deep;
There never was a thing so lone
As that unguided ship;
It was a fearful mockery
Of recent hope and life,
Of smiles on the hearth
Lay glowing, red and rife.

Familiar objects met our gaze.
The Captain's board was spread.
And seats were ranged around for those
Whose fate was wrapped in dread;
And on the wall a watch was hung,
That clicked with cheerful sound,
Contrasting with the silent gloom
Of everything around.

The ship was laden heavily
With spices and with gold.
And not a hand had stirred the piles
Of treasure in the hold;
There was no trace of piracy,
Of struggle or dismay.
The arms hung round the cabin walls
In long and bright array.

It is a fearful mystery.
That lies unfathomed yet,
There never came a word or sign
From those we still regret;
I dare not muse upon their fate.
Its horror, its despair,
But all among the gazers knew
No mortal hand was there."

It was more than sixty years after the event had taken place which I have described above, that the ship Soldan, of New York, Captain Henry Robson, on a passage from St. Petersburg, struck upon the Falsterbo shoals in the Baltic, and sustained so much damage that the ship was taken into the snug little port of Ystad, and there hove out and repaired. The Soldan was detained for several weeks in the town of Ystad, which is pleasantly situated on the Swedish coast, overlooking the Baltic Sea.

While in conversation one day with some Swedish gentlemen, Captain Robson's curiosity was excited by an accidental allusion to an eccentric old man who had resided in the neighborhood of the town for a great many years, had been a sailor in his youth, and was supposed to be a native of America. As some mystery was believed to be connected with his voluntary exile from his home, the worthy captain resolved to visit him, and make an attempt to solve the mystery, if any existed. It is but fair to state that he was also influenced by a better motive—a desire to see and if necessary serve a countryman, aged, perhaps unfriended, a resident in a foreign land.

Capt. Robson found him living in a humble hut, alone. A small piece of land was attached to his residence, which he cultivated by the labor of his hands. He was quite old, at least four score, his head was thinly covered with white hair, and his beard was long and also white as the driven snow, which gave him the venerable appearance of a holy anchorite. His figure was slight, but he stood erect, and moved about as if there was vigor in his limbs, and the flash of his keen gray eye showed that his intellect was not impaired.

Capt. Robson intruded himself to him as the master of the American ship in port, and found the old man quite willing to enter into conversation. He acknowledged that he was an American, but had been for many years a stranger to his native land. He asked many questions relating to the United States, and seemed much gratified at the information he received. Capt. Robson inquired why he left his home, abandoned his early occupation as a sailor, and sought out this obscure corner in a foreign country, to lead a solitary and monotonous life.

The hoary-headed sage said in reply that he had never communicated to mortal man the circumstances which led him to desert his home, his friends and his country, and flee to a distant soil, there to drop anchor and moor for life. But as his sands were fast running out, he had wished for an opportunity to relate the circumstances attending the last voyage he had made in an American vessel, which were of a nature to cast a dark cloud over his soul, and embitter his whole life, which he would gladly have laid down many years before, if God had so willed it, as an expiation of his misdeeds.

THE OLD MAN'S STORY.

"My name," said he, "is Thomas Hanway. I was born in a village but a few miles distant from Providence, in Rhode Island, and at an early age embraced the occupation of a mariner. I made a number of voyages from Providence or Newport to the West Indies, and when I was about nineteen years old, being strong and active, able to do all a seaman's duty—and addicted, I regret to say, to all a seaman's vices—I shipped with Capt. Huxham on board the Sea Bird, bound to Bristol.

The brig was a small vessel, the officers and crew consisting of the captain, Mr. Rundell, the mate, four men before the mast, and the cook, who was a young man belonging to Newport, it being his first voyage to sea. Captain Huxham was a stern man, who cared little for the comfort of the sailors, and was a great stickler for discipline. Mr. Rundell, the mate, was tall and muscular, and prided himself on his skill and power to knock men about like nine pins, and get out of them the worth of their wages. If the captain was disliked, the mate was bitterly hated by the whole crew. Unfortunately for me I was placed in the larboard watch, and my watchmate was a middle-aged burly-looking native of Great Britain, who had seen much of the world, and borne a prominent part in many strange and desperate adventures. He was a bold, reckless fellow, case hardened in rascality, and, as he often boasted, feared neither God nor man.

As a matter of course, Jack Hensdale and Mr. Rundell soon had a falling out; Jack was insolent, and the mate arbitrary and clad with authority. After a terrible pounding from the mate, my shipmate was forced to succumb, but he often threw out dark hints of revenge, and was sulky and ill-humored during the passage across the Atlantic. Occasionally Jack received a forcible reminder from Mr. Rundell, in the shape of a clip in the side of the head or a heavy rope's-end over the shoulder, to be more attentive to his work or more respectful in his demeanor, all of which tended to increase the hostility of my watchmate toward the mate. In the little dispute and troubles between Jack Hensdale and Mr. Rundell, the captain of course took the part of the mate, and more than once aided that officer in "taking the pride out of Jack," as he called it, by the application of an emollient known as the oil of hemp.

Jack often complained to me of his wrongs, and expatiated on the brutal treatment he received. Nor were the abuses confined to him alone. I was sometimes unpleasantly made aware of the weight of the mate's brawny fist, and sympathizing deeply with my shipmate, allowed him to exercise unhappily influence over my actions. More than once during the passage, Jack suggested in a round about way, the expediency of making the mate "food for fishes," but I was not yet prepared for the deliberate preparation of the crime of murder, even under such continued provocation, and suggested that the passage would soon be over, we could desert on our arrival at Bristol and afterwards waylay Mr. Rundell, and with a good flogging pay him the principal and interest of the heavy debt we owed him; then travelling across the country to Falmouth we could easily find another ship and embark in quest of other adventures. To this plan of mine, Jack Hensdale, after some mutterings about the delay, and a half uttered threat that the flogging should last him for a life time, acceded.

The Sea Bird arrived safely in Bristol; her cargo was discharged, and she was soon ready to return to the United States. Jack and myself had made our calculations to abandon the brig a few days before she was to leave port, and had taken some of our baggage clandestinely on shore. Our shipmates became aware of our intentions, but refused to accompany us, and in order to curry favor with the captain and mate, informed them of our projected movements. A stopper was accordingly clapped on our proceedings, in the shape of an officer, who conveyed us to jail where we were kept on short allowance until the brig was on the point of sailing, when we were taken most ingloriously on board,

handcuffed, and looking unutterable things.

The rebuke of the captain as we passed over the gangway, the insulting jeers of the mate, and the winks and smiles of the crew were not calculated to solace us for our disappointment or awaken Christian principles within our bosom. And as the mate soon resumed his old practice of using his fists rather freely, Jack declared that "he would stand it no longer, but would throw the unfeeling brute overboard." To the commission of this terrible crime I offered no arguments in opposition.

A few nights after this, we were standing along on a wind, under doubled-reefed topsails, in the middle watch. The brig was laboring heavily in a head sea, and I was at the helm, my temper ruffled by the coarse and vulgar epithets with which Mr. Rundell from time to time honored me, because I could not with the tiller along on a wind, under doubled-reefed topsails, in the middle watch. The brig was laboring heavily in a head sea, and I was at the helm, my temper ruffled by the coarse and vulgar epithets with which Mr. Rundell from time to time honored me, because I could not with the tiller

burst from the bolt-rope.

"Hallo!" shouted the mate; "what's to pay now?"

"The fore sheet has slipped off the cleet, sir," replied Jack Hensdale.

"Well haul it aft, then, and be hanged to you, and belay it properly, you know nothing son of a soldier!" Jack took hold of the fore sheet, but requested assistance, being unable to haul it aft alone. The mate went forward to the lee waist, and seized the rope, when Jack struck him a blow on the head with a heaver, which knocked him against the bulwarks, and then seized him by the throat to throw him overboard.

Mr. Rundell was stunned only for a moment. Before Jack could accomplish his murderous work, the mate recovered his senses, and struggled desperately for life, calling on the Captain for assistance. Jack finding the work more difficult than he expected, summoned me to his aid. I left the helm and rushed toward the spot where the combatants were engaged in deadly strife. I grasped the mate around the body, and by our united strength we lifted him on the gunwale, in spite of his convulsive efforts to break away; and just as the Captain who rushed up the companionway at the cries of the mate, reached the waist, and while the men belonging to the starboard watch were hastening up the fore scuttle to his rescue, we succeeded in overcoming his resistance, and dropped him into the water!

The captain saw the act, although too late to prevent it. He shouted "murder!" and called upon the men to secure the murderers. We defended ourselves manfully for a time, but at last were knocked down, handcuffed and dragged below into a sort of half deck which was entered from the steerage. A couple of ringbolts were driven firmly into the ship's side, to which we were lashed, and kept on a short allowance of bread and water. The Captain visited us every day, and with a triumphant smile consoled us with the assurance that we should soon be in port, and nothing could save us from being hanged. Indeed, for a time there seemed to be no hope of escaping the gallows. We were seen in the very act, and under circumstances which rendered it almost certain that the crime was deliberately planned; and no one could doubt for a moment that I was as guilty as my shipmate, who attempted to do the deed single-handed.

But Jack Hensdale had been in limbo before, and was familiar with the mystery of handcuffs. Before we reached the American coast we could both manage to slip off our irons at pleasure without a great degree of pain, and we formed a plan to gain possession of the brig when we came in sight of land, and make a determined effort to avoid the hangman's noose.

Shortly after daylight one morning, land was seen from the top-gallant yard, afar off. The Captain was rejoiced, for he and the three men with him were almost worn out with their labors and watchings. The wind being moderate, and the Captain sleepy, having been on deck the greater portion of the night, he retired to his state room to seek repose, assuring us with a spiteful grin, that Point Judith was in sight, and we should be

snugly deposited in jail before twelve o'clock.

My shipmate and myself, soon afterward, relieved ourselves of our handcuffs and crept cautiously into the steerage, and then passed stealthily up the cabin stairs to the quarter deck. The man at the helm was terrified at the sight of us. With our unshaven faces and uncombed locks we must have looked wild and wicked, as if bent on some desperate deed. He was about to cry out when we menaced him with instant death if he made any noise. A bucket with a rope attached to it was standing near the break of the deck, and Jack told the helmsman to draw a bucket of water to "fetch the pump." The poor fellow obeyed, trembling with fear, but as he was leaning over the gangway, Hensdale seized him by the leg and pitched him headlong into the sea!

The cook, who was busy in the galley, hearing the cry of his unfortunate shipmate, as he struck the water, came out to see what was the matter, but was compelled to share his terrible fate. We now had possession of the deck. The Captain was below, asleep in his state room, and one man was in the fore-castle, ignorant of the scenes which had been enacted on deck. Horror-struck at the atrocious acts of which we had been guilty, and shrinking from the commission of further crime, I entreated Jack to save the lives of the Captain and our remaining shipmate. He replied with a demoniac frown, that we had gone too far to look back, that clemency now was out of the question, unless we were willing to swing on the gallows—for dead men only tell no tales.

Hensdale threw down a coil of rigging on the quarter deck, directly over the Captain's state room. The noise, as we anticipated, awoke Captain Huxham, who turned out, and putting on his clothes in haste, ascended the cabin stairs, but before he could put a foot on the deck, or was aware that the mutineers had possession of the brig, a blow from a hand-spike in the strong hands of Jack Hensdale felled him to the deck. We at once laid hold of him, and bundled him over the quarter rail. Only one of the crew remained to be desposed of. He was summoned on deck, and summarily despatched.

"Now," said Jack, "we must be lively and get tackles on the fore and main yard arms, and hoist out the long-boat."

This was the only boat on board, the jolly-boat having been washed from the stern in a gale of wind off Cape Clear. We rigged the purchases, hove the brig to, and took the falls to the windlass, and with but little trouble succeeded in our undertaking. Our handcuffs were thrown overboard. The log-book and the captain's journal were destroyed. Jack took a few silver dollars from the captain's writing desk, but nothing beside was disturbed.

"Now," said Jack, "we'll square the yards, get the brig before the wind, put the helm amidships, and let her take care of herself; and then the sooner we clear out the better for our health."

At this time Block Island was in sight, not more than eight or nine miles off, and as we were in the fair channel of vessels bound into Narragansett Bay, Hensdale feared that some craft might fall in with us, and our appearance in a ship's long boat would excite suspicion, and might cause us to be apprehended. It was therefore thought best to pull in toward Block Island, in order to avoid the vessels on the coast, then lay in our oars and remain in the offing until dark. We accordingly embarked, after carefully effacing any marks of a struggle that might appear on the decks, and without taking even a change of clothing. Jack was desirous of leaving everything in the fore-castle, and cabin, and on deck, precisely as it was when we commenced our fiendish deeds. "It will puzzle them for a long time," said he, "to find out what has become of the crew."

That night we pulled in to Block Island and landed. We found several small fishing boats hauled up on the beach. We launched one of them, then ballasted the long boat with heavy stones, and towed it off into deep water, where we pulled out the plug, when it soon filled and sank. We then took to our oars and

pulled for the main land, set the boat adrift and taking the first road we came to, leading to the westward, proceeded briskly on our way. At sunrise next morning we found ourselves but a few miles from Stonington. On reaching that place Jack Hensdale remarked it would be well for our safety that we would separate, and darkly intimated his intention of embracing the first opportunity to proceed to the Gulf of Mexico or the Bay of Honduras, and join a gang of lawless fellows who would not stand for trifles, and whose haunts he will know.

Jack divided with me the money he had taken from Captain Huxham's writing desk, and after bidding me be of good cheer, assuring me that the fate of the captain and others of the Sea Bird's crew we had murdered could never be discovered, he shook my hand heartily, and turned down another street. I never saw or heard aught of him again. I went into a shop and bought a few articles, of clothing, as the garments I wore were disordered and out of repair, and then strolled to the wharf, where I found a sloop on the point of sailing for New York. The captain consented to give me a passage, provided I would assist in the management of the vessel.

On reaching New York, I lost no time in seeking a ship bound on a foreign voyage. I could not convince myself that I was safe until I put the Atlantic Ocean between me and the country of my birth. I was restless, impatient to be off, for my bosom was burning with the fires of remorse; and as I traversed the streets I often cast a look behind, to see if the avenger of innocent blood was not at my heels.

I shipped in a brig bound to Copenhagen; but before I sailed I heard people talking about a strange event that occurred at Newport. The brig Sea Bird had arrived safely in the harbor, but without a soul on board! What had become of the officers and crew, no one could tell. It was said there was great excitement in Newport, and messengers were dispatched far and wide, and small vessels were chartered to cruise along the coast, hoping that some clue would be found to this appalling mystery.

On arriving at Gottenburg I deserted, being determined never to return to the United States. After working along shore for a time, I got employment in a small vessel which traded between Copenhagen and Swedish ports in the Baltic. But the fear of being discovered, arrested, tried and hanged, followed me wherever I went, and the sight of an American vessel, or an American flag, threw me into a state of nervous agitation piteous to behold.

At length I arrived at this little port of Ystad. I had learned the Swedish language, and found no difficulty in getting employment on shore, and here in this secluded nook, seldom visited by people belonging to any other nation than the Danes, I resolved to remain. My life has been a sad and lonely one. Bitterly have I repented of my misdeeds, and since I set my foot on shore in this part of the world, I have never knowingly wronged a human being, but have sought by my exemplary conduct to atone in some degree for the sins I committed on board the Sea Bird. I wish I could believe that I have made my peace with God, for I am daily expecting the summons to another world."

Such was the story found among Capt. Robson's papers after his death, a few years ago, and written with his own hand. It furnishes an explanation of the mysterious circumstances connected with "The Legend of the Lonely Ship."

The late Baron D'Aboville has, by his will, charged the *Societe d'Encouragement* with the labor of distributing annually, during ten years, a prize of two thousand francs to the manufacture in France who shall have employment for the year preceding, five persons who have lost the use of any member. A totally blind person counts as two; and a man who has both legs or arms amputated counts also as two. A man who has both legs and one arm amputated, and is totally blind, would alone fulfill the conditions required. Hospitals are excluded from the competition. The first prize will be awarded in January next.